the RARS Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

RARS

Worldwide Friendship

January 1900 Number 351

SKYWARN Conference in RTP, January 8th

2000

Thomas Babb KF4JKQ
Central Carolina SKYWARN EC

The 1st Annual Central Carolina SKYWARN Conference will be held January 8th at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center in the RTP. The conference hours are from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm.

Guest speakers will include **George Lemons** and **Joel Kline** from the National Weather Service, to discuss Amateur Radio and it's involvement with severe weather. Also speaking will be **Chris Thompson** and **Elizabeth Gardner** from WRAL, **Gary McGrady** from NewsChannel 11, WB22 lead meteorologist **Steve Sweinckowski**, and **Emily Byrd** from the NBC17 weather center.

Everyone is Welcome! For up-to-date information, visit the Central Carolina SKYWARN web page:

www.CentralCarolinaSkywarn.net

KD4MYE, W4CC Vie for NC Section Manager Job

Roger Allen KD4MYE of Youngsville, and John Covington W4CC of Charoltte have both filed petitions with the ARRL for the position of **North Carolina Section Manager**.

John Covington W4CC

Ballots will be mailed to ARRL members in the NC Section by January 2nd, and will be counted on February 22nd.

The winner of this election will succeed Reed Whitten AB4W, who is retiring as SM after 12 years.

Roger Allen KD4MYE

The Section Manager is the only elected position in the ARRL Field Organization. The SM appoints and supervises all the volunteer leaders in the section, including ARES EC's.

Look for more information on the candidates and election in the February ***Exciter***.

Where Did The 147.15 Repeater Go?

The PCRN 147.15 repeater has a new address: ***145.39 MHz*** *(82.5 Hz PL Tone). In addition, a* ***NEW repeater*** *is on the air from the 1000 foot level of the WUNC Tower west of Chapel Hill, on 147.135 (also 82.5 Hz PL). This, on the two-meter band that we often say is "full," with no room for more repeaters in the Triangle area.* ***Frank Lynch W4FAL*** *describes the frequency swap that permitted a new, wide-area machine to squeeze into the band:*

This afternoon, (Saturday, December 4th, 1999), Danny K4ITL, Bob K4HA, and I went to the Lake Wheeler tower and performed the QSY of 147.150+ to the new frequency for the WB4TQD repeater. The new frequency is 145.390, minus offset, and PL 82.5 Hz (yes you must encode PL to key the repeater). Danny had put together all new hardware (with the exception of the PA and the power supply), and the whole thing went about as smooth as I've ever seen (thanks to Danny). 145.39 had been coordinated to a proposed repeater in Roanoke Rapids, and that repeater will now use 147.150 when it comes on the air.

Why the change? This change will make possible the usage of the *new PCRN repeater* over in Chatham County on the UNC TV tower. The new machine is also now on the air (147.135, plus offset, PL 82.5 Hz).

The request to make this change was prompted by K4ITL's efforts to secure a new site for the 2-meter machine in Chatham County. When it looked like this might actually occur, he contacted me (W4FAL, SERA NC Frequency Coordinator) and discussed his plan to add another machine to the network. The only frequency that could be found that would possibly coordinate at the Chatham County site from a co-channel spacing requirement was 147.135, but this of course was much too close to operate on an adjacent channel with 147.150 in Raleigh. Thus a plan was set into motion to do a frequency swap between

see "Frequency Swap" on page 3

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS), was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the Amateur Radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, RARS reincorporated and obtained 501(c)(3) Non-Profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friendship through Amateur Radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic need; to educate members in radio technique and to assist in obtaining Amateur Radio licenses.

Anyone interested in Amateur Radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are $18.00 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay $5.00 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are $12.00 per year. Dues for non-licensed Associate members are $9.00 per year.

Officers

President	**Jack Ritter WØUCE** **846-1848** **GIG38@aol.com**
Vice-President	**Tim Nicholson KF4RTX** **501-7746** **kf4rtx@arrl.net**
Secretary	**Jeff Wittich AC4ZO** **362-9456** **ac4zo@arrl.net**
Treasurer	**David Fix N4YTO** **677-8320** **dfix@pagesz.net**
Exciter Editor	**Gary Pearce KN4AQ** **380-9944** **kn4aq@arrl.net**

SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

Info

Repeaters:

145.13
146.64
224.64
444.525 (88.5 PL)
444.95 (88.5 PL)

Web Site:

http://www.rars.org

President's Corner

Jack Ritter WØUCE

I would like to open the January, 2000 Presidents Corner by thanking the RARS nominating committee for recommending me as a candidate and the membership for your confidence in electing me as RARS president for the next two years. I will make every effort to maintain and further your trust and confidence.

A question came to mind as I started writing this article: "What does the title president mean?" The dictionary lists several considerations: (1) A person appointed or elected to preside over an organized body of people, (2) The chief executive of a republic or country, (3) The chief officer of a branch of government corporation or university. Obviously number (1) is applicable to the position of RARS president. A thesaurus listed several alternative word options to include Chief, Executive, Director, Chair, Ruler and Commander, none of which are applicable to this position so I decided to share with you the following.

My definition for the title RARS President is directly relative to responsibilities which, in my opinion, are the most important aspects of the position and include:

- Listening to the membership
- Assuming overall responsibility
- Acting on recommendations
- Furthering the cause of the organization
- Stimulating growth and participation
- Fostering Elmering for newcomers
- Enriching the value of membership
- Retaining and growing membership
- Broadening activity awareness
- Delegating responsibilities
- Leading by example
- Enhancing public awareness

The greatest assets of any organization are its people, and nowhere in the description of an organization does the word "I" appear, therefore, ***we***, make RARS what it has been, what it is and what it will be. We also share the rewards and responsibility for success or failure.

At the Christmas party I asked for a show of hands by those planning to attend the January meeting, the majority in attendance raised their hands. I then asked everyone to do a home work assignment by making a list of what you personally feel can and should be done to improve RARS, overcome problems and stimulate growth of the organization. Before we can fix what is broken, we have to know what it is. To improve, we must stimulate ideas, concepts, gain direction and perspective. To accomplish such tasks we must define goals and objectives and set forth action plans to make RARS what we, the membership, want it to be.

Lets start by listing what needs to be fixed or accomplished and define mutual objectives for what we feel RARS should and can be. As members we must also cooperate in growth stimulation. We all know at least one former member who is inactive, one potential new member and likely, one person we can introduce to this wonderful hobby. Please make a special effort to bring a friend, former member or potential new member to the January meeting and lets pool resources, talents and abilities to make things happen. See you in Y2K - 73

FCC Rejects Pending Amateur Petitions

ARRL Letter

The FCC recently denied several petitions from Amateur Radio operators and groups that have been pending, some for years. Among them are several petitions from the ARRL.

One of the League petitions, RM-8763, asked the Commission to strengthen PRB-1, the ruling that requires state and local governments to make reasonable accomodations for Amateur Radio antennas. Specifically, the League called on the FCC to amend Section 97.15(e) of its rules to say that any state or local antenna restrictions limiting ham radio antennas to heights below 70 feet would be "presumed unreasonable" unless the state or local authority could show its restrictions were necessary for health, safety or aesthetic reasons.

In its denial in an Order released November 19, the FCC said it would not be "prudent" or "appropriate" to set a height standard for amateur antennas and supporting structures "because of varying circumstances that may occur" for differing antenna configurations.

The League intends to ask the FCC to reconsider parts of their petition.

The FCC also denied a petition by the **Central States VHF Society**. That petition, filed May 3, had **expressed concern about increasing encroachment into the so-called weak-signal portions of the bands above 50 MHz** by wider-bandwidth modes, such as voice FM and packet. CSVHFS said voluntary band plans had not been successful in limiting the activity.

The FCC said that some band segments already exist that protect weak-signal operation, that it is "unreasonable" to expect to operate in a totally interference-free environment, and that "subdividing amateur service bands on the basis of operating interests would result in a loss of flexibility to accommodate changes in operating trends and emergence of new technologies."

In addition, the **FCC dismissed as "unnecessary" an ARRL request for a declaratory ruling to equate band plan adherence with "good amateur practice."** The FCC said the requested changes "would have the effect of transforming voluntary band plans into de facto required mandates," something inconsistent with current FCC policy.

Frequency Swap - *continued from page 1*

the Raleigh 147.150 and the proposed Roanoke Rapids 145.390. Due to some issues with tower loading at the Roanoke Rapids location, that machine is not on the air yet. That frequency was also capable of being coordinated in Raleigh, thus the selection of the former Roanoke Rapids frequency.

After the swap, all three of these new machines, (147.150 in Roanoke Rapids, 145.390 in Raleigh, and 147.135 in Chapel Hill) will use 82.5 Hz. CTCSS. This was a requirement to coordinate these machines at their new locations and will also provide for elimination of the nuisance key-ups for distant co-channel users during band openings.

The folks at PCRN hope that everyone will enjoy the new machines as they come on line and that the changes won't be a big inconvenience. There have been some concerns about the machines going tone access. As the density and usage of 2M machines continue to increase, the use of tone access is becoming increasingly important. In many instances, it's not possible to coordinate a frequency without the use of tone. In North Carolina, about 50% of the 2M repeaters use CTCSS access.

As a final note, we all need to take a moment to realize how fortunate we are to have a wide-reaching repeater organization like PCRN. A special note of appreciation goes to Danny, K4ITL. His tireless efforts, along with his team of volunteers over the years have produced a system that covers all of North Carolina and portions of several other states with an audio and RF quality that ANY commercial or government system would envy.

If you like what PCRN has done and is continuing to do, please consider becoming a member of this fine organization. To learn more about PCRN visit their web site at:

http://www.ipass.net/~falynch/w4fal/pcrn.html

RARS Dinner: 4th Tuesday at various locations Info: Nets and Web

RARSFest 2000

North Carolina State ARRL Convention

Hamfest & Computer Fair

Sunday, April 9th, 2000

8:00 am to 4:00 pm

featuring FCC's Riley Hollingsworth

Letters

Well, with the passing of another year, and a new President prepared to lead us into 2000, I would like to pause for a moment, and thank Gary, KN4AQ, for his contribution over the last two years. From time to time, I have heard him say that he's more comfortable as a doer than a leader, but even so I have never known him to resolve any situation in anything other than a responsible manor. Gary, you have done well, and thanks for your ideas, leadership, and friendship.

Also I would like to thank the members of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society for re-electing me to the position of Secretary. It is a job that I have enjoyed for the last six years, and look forward to serving you for the next two.

73,

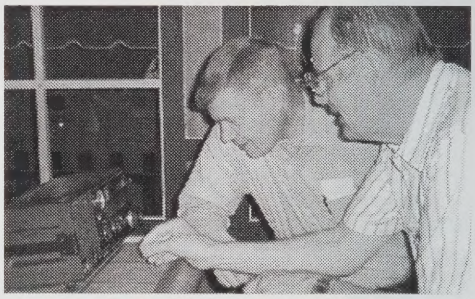
Jeff - AC4ZO

SWL/Scanner Report

Kelly Mills

The December meeting of the Scanner/SWL SIG was held on the 13th at the El Rodeo restaurant on Pleasant Valley Road in Raleigh. Several topics were discussed. Tom McKee, discussed the GE Communications "Search-Lock Monitor." This circuit made the first scanning radio possible. Tom worked on this product in 1964 and it was patented in 1969. David Crawford handed out a utility outages frequency sheet just in case the lights go out on New Year's eve, and Kelly Mills discussed the advantages of Nickel Metal Hydride batteries.

The meeting concluded with our annual magazine swap and junk box giveaway. There were seven people attending the meeting, and the meeting broke up about 9:30 PM.



Wayne Blackwell and Tom McKee play with a Sony ICF 6700W shortwave receiver

The **January meeting** will be held on the 17th (third Monday). This will be a show and tell meeting where we invite anybody to bring radio equipment to demonstrate or to discuss monitoring experiences. We will be discussing what we heard on New Year's eve. Join us at 6:30 for a meal at El Rodeo, and for the meeting that will begin at 7:30.

Everyone is welcome. You don't need to be an amateur radio operator to attend, so bring your monitoring equipment and questions to share with the group. For more information, e-mail Bob Zeher (ke4jvy@juno.com) or Kelly Mills (ae4fg@hotmail.com), or call Bob at 844-9757.

APRS Recovers Stolen Van

Dave Dobbins K7GPS

Just a few weeks ago, Bill VE6OLD woke up to find his van missing from his driveway near Bentley, Alberta. He ran down to the computer, and had a quick peek. Hmm, seems VE6OLD-15 was driving around the city of Red Deer.

A quick call into the local RCMP detachment, and the boys in the red serge were dispatched to the scene. It seems some young teens needed a vehicle to haul their loot from a recent spate of B&E's to a new location.

Not only did the young hooligans get caught red handed for grand theft auto, but the stolen goodies in the van tied them to a number of other crime scenes as well. Wouldn't you love to have seen the look on their faces when old Smokey shows up on their tail?

Bill's only complaint? His beacon rate was set at every 5 minutes. It took too long to get position updates from the stolen vehicle.

The RCMP were interested in how Bill knew where his stolen van was, and had a quick introduction to APRS at Bill's house.

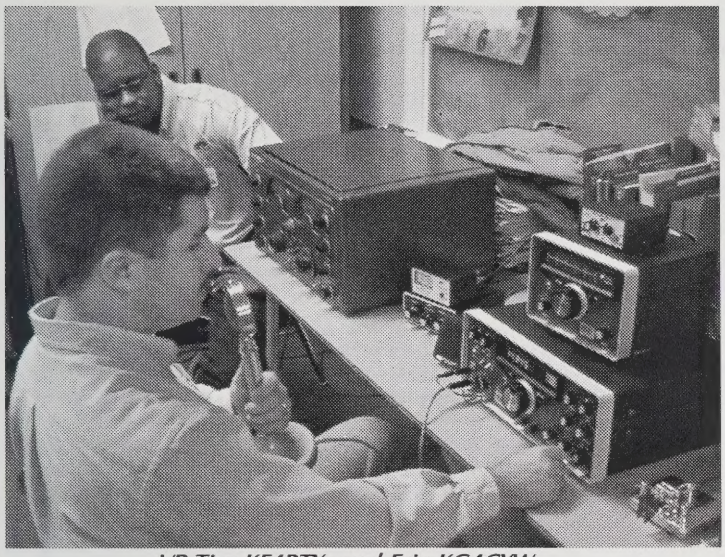
This is the second time I've heard of APRS helping retrieve a stolen vehicle. The first occurred in San Diego a couple years ago. Thanks to James Ewen for sharing this great news.

forwarded by Ralph N4NEQ

Check Into the RARS 8:00 Net Each Evening on the 146.64 Repeater

Ham Radio Demonstration at Washington School

Tim Nicholson KF4RTX

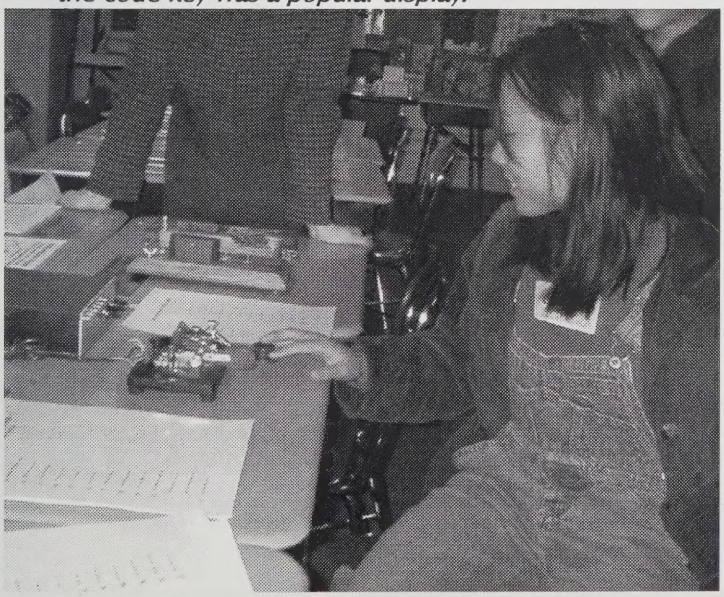


VP Tim KF4RTX, and Eric KG4CXW try for some HF contacts.

Sometime around the September Board meeting, RARS Education Director Lynn KO4QH asked for some volunteers to do a school presentation in November at the Washington G&T Elementary school. Being the sucker I am for helping out, I threw my hat into the ring, thinking that it might be fun. Was I ever right!

On November 16, Joe Zobkiw WA2UZO, Eric Haywood KG4CXW and his XYL Donna, Alan and Lynn Pitegoff AB4OZ and KO4QH, and I set up our ham radio display at the school. It wasn't very elaborate - just a keyer, paddles, a straight key, some QSL cards from Max Bloodworth KO4TV's collection (edited for content), and my Ten Tec Omni D. To be perfectly honest, I didn't expect the kids to show much interest in the things we had, most of all Morse code. It wasn't until the kids started flowing in that I realized how much they really were interested in radio.

Our assistant tries her hand at Morse Code. As usual, the code key was a popular display.



Just about all of them found Morse code fascinating, and many of them came by to talk to me about my radio. Unfortunately, the only contact I had that night was with a guy from Texas, so we couldn't show off any DX.

The sheer fascination of talking to someone far away was summed up by one boy. He approached me as I was calling "CQ" for what seemed like the millionth time. I stopped when he appeared to have a question.

"Who are you talking to?" he asked.

"No one right now," I replied. "No one seems to be listening.".

"Have you talked to any Indians?"

I thought he was referring to India, so I replied "No, I haven't talked to anyone from that country yet."

"Well, what about the Pilgrims?".

The time of year dawned on me at that moment, and it was all I could do to keep from laughing, more at myself for falling into the question. I could only reply "No, I'm afraid I don't have that good of a radio."

If you ever get a chance to volunteer and demonstrate ham radio to children, take my advice. Do it. I think all of the hams with me that night will agree - you won't forget it.

AC4ZO Takes On Field Day Chairmanship

Jeff Wittich AC4ZO has volunteered to step in as Field Day chairman for RARS' Y2K Field Day. Bill Pond NØWP, who was elected Field Day Chair in November, resigned the position after deciding the work load at his job wouldn't permit him time to do a good job with Field Day. Bill was Field Day Chair in '99.

We thank Bill for his efforts last year, and look forward to another great Field Day in 2K! Anyone with an early Field Day idea? Contact Jeff!

Board Meeting Minutes

November, 1999

Jeff Wittich AC4ZO

Minutes of the RARS November Board Meeting - November 16, 1999

There was no Board meeting this month because a quorum was not assembled.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO - Secretary

Club Meeting Minutes

December, 1999

Jeff Wittich AC4ZO

Minutes of the Regular November RARS Meeting - December 7, 1999

The regular meeting of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society was held on December 7, 1999 at the Forest Hills Baptist Church on Clark Avenue.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm by President Gary Pearce, KN4AQ, who welcomed 71 members and 4 guests. He then announced the passing away of long time RARS member, Pete Bliss, W8DTD.

David N4YTO gave the treasurers report. He said the RARS checking account contains about $4,200; The savings account has about $14,893; and the investment account is $14,305. RARS membership is 261.

At this point, Charlie Brown, W4VFJ performed the installation of Officers and Board members for the year 2000.

Outgoing President Gary Pearce presented the gavel to newly installed president Jack Ritter.

Jeff, AC4ZO presented ARRL 1st Contact Awards to recent class members Jim Walter, KG4FIJ; and Karl Ulrich, KG4FII.

KN4AQ introduced Anna Davenport from the Food Bank Of North Carolina, who said a few words about their program, and thanked the members for their contributions. The drive was coordinated by Tank, KT4OC and raised nearly 500 pounds of food.

Jack, WØUCE took a moment to ask members to consider the things they would like the club to do differently, and submit their thoughts to him.

Lynn, KO4QH announced that the RARS dinner for December has been cancelled.

Matt, W2BYV reported that we have been asked to have operators available on the night of December 31 in case of communications interruptions at the 12 Town Halls across the county. Matt asked that volunteers contact him.

KN4AQ announced that the position of Field Day Chairman is open, and the Nominating Committee is actively seeking a candidate.

The door prize went to K4DAM, and the official meeting adjourned at 8:00. The remainder of the evening was the annual Holiday Party.

Jeff Wittich, AC4ZO, Secretary

SKYWARN Spotter Training will ***not*** be held at the February RARS Meeting. The NWS is reducing the total number of classes given each year, and rotating them around the area. Spotter training is expected to be held in Durham, probably in March. Watch for details in next month's ***Exciter.***

Pete Bliss W8DTD - SK

David Fordham KD9LA

RARS member Peter Hanover Bliss, W8DTD, passed away on Saturday, November 20, 1999, at the age of 69.

Born April 3, 1930, in Chicago, Illinois, he was the son of Ray and Helen Bliss. He is survived by his XYL, the former Arline Rae Rickey, whom he met in elementary school in Lakewood, OH, at 7 years of age.

Pete graduated from Lakewood High School and earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Fenn College in Cleveland, OH, in 1953.

Pete's entire life was radio, radio, and more radio. His father Ray held ham call 1RB. Pete had caught the ham bug by the time he was old enough to say "CQ". Pete was licensed as a teenager with callsign W8DTD right after the second War. His employment career included over 25 years in sales, marketing, and strategic planning with the Mobile Radio division of General Electric in Lynchburg, VA. While at GE, he was instrumental in the placement of the first radio transmission towers atop the Sears Tower in Chicago.

In his view, the highlight of his U.S. Naval Reserve service was his assignment as a radioman on PBY ASW patrol planes. He also was in charge of radio communications on Barry Goldwater's private plane during the Goldwater presidential bid in 1964.

Pete's most recent employment was as partner with Rufus Allen and Associates in Raleigh, dealing with business mergers and acquisitions, but Pete continued his radio interest by spending more time on the ham bands. He participated regularly in the Hotliners and Amateur Electronic Wizards nets, and was proud of his many ham radio awards, including the infamous "Possum Trotters" certificate.

In addition to his wife of 46 years, he is survived by two sons, Gary Raymond Bliss of Woodbridge, Virginia, and Jeffrey Rickey Bliss of Raleigh; and two daughters, Deborah Bliss Fordham of Weyers Cave, VA, and Tammy Laverne Bliss of Smyrna, GA. Daughter Debbie is a ham, KB4WPE, and she married a ham, David Fordham, KD9LA. Both are active on the bands from Virginia. Pete is also survived by seven grandchildren, two nieces, and his faithful companion and amplifier heat-sink, Wrenn the cat.

A visitation and memorial service will be held Wednesday, January 3, 2000, at 2:00 pm, at North Raleigh Funeral Home, 7615 Six Forks Road. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Pete's memory to one of the following:

The University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, P.O. Box 297153,Houston, TX, 77297;

Duke University Cancer Center, c/o Alumni & Developent Records,
614 Chapel Drive Annex, Durham, NC, 27708;

or to the charity of your choice.

Sherm Starnes W4TZU - SK

Cyndi Pearce KD4ACW

It's always hard when we hear of a fellow ham passing. During my time in RARS I've received the bad news more than I would like. Some of the wonderful people that come to mind that left this world too soon are Rollin Ransom NF4P, Doris Plaks KE4CDR and Lew Thompson KD4TRJ.

I was hit especially hard upon the news of Sherman Starnes W4TZU's passing on December 10. Sherman and I go way back, long before I even considered getting into ham radio.

I first meet Sherman at ITT while I was a summer intern during my last year at NCSU. He was my supervisor. I was given the task, along with another summer student, of cataloging hundreds of components in a database to be used by the engineers. I was pretty familiar with most parts but there were quite a few I had never seen before. Sherman was always available to assist me and I learned a lot in a short period of time under his guidance. He always told me I would make a good engineer. I appreciated the confidence he had in me.

I remember seeing his car one day and noticed the ham plate. We got to talking about how I had grown up in a "ham" household. All those nights listening to my father contesting on CW.

I went to work for ITT permanently the next year so I kept in touch with Sherman during that time. I'm pretty sure his kind words about me helped me get that first job. After I left ITT I didn't run into Sherman again until I joined RARS. Eventually he and his wife Betty moved to Florida. I kept up with him by email and would run into him occasionally when he would come back for hamfests. I also kept up with him through his brother Carl who was always at hamfests. Sherman had been battling liver disease for a few years. He always had hope of a liver transplant but unfortunately time ran out. I'm just sorry I never made it down to visit him in Florida.

The word we have from his family is that his body will be cremated, and the ashes spread at sea from a plane. They've asked that no flowers be sent, but cards may be sent to:

Betty Starnes
3233 Turtle Creek Rd.
St. Augustine, FL 32086

Sherman, you will be dearly missed. I'll always have a fond memory of your wonderful smile to keep with me forever.

Exciter Now Available in PDF as E-Mail Attachment

Gary Pearce KN4AQ
Exciter Editor

The RARS ***Exciter*** is now available each month in Adobe Acrobat PDF format. RARS members and others receiving the ***Exciter*** may now choose to have it e-mailed, with no printed issue mailed.

Advantages of the PDF version include:

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For now, there is no dues discount for receiving only the electronic ***Exciter***. The club will save some money on printing and postage... please consider it your gift to RARS.

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Exciter

Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc.
PO Box 17124
Raleigh, North Carolina 27619

Holiday Spirits High at December Club Meeting

Club members donate two "Tanks" of food (over 400 pounds) to the NC Food Bank. The Food Bank's Anna Davenport joins organizer Tank KT4OC to say thanks.

FIRST CONTACT
*Jeff AC4ZO presents ARRL **First Contact** certificates to Jim KG4FIJ and Karl K4LNX. Have **you** been someone's First Contact? Tell Jeff, and he'll arrange a certificate!*

Well, another RARS Christmas party is over, the last of the century. It seemed that everyone enjoyed themselves and had a good time, but I couldn't get around to speak to everyone. While it is still fresh on the minds of those who attended, I would like to get some feedback.

How was the food? Did you like the selection? Was there something else you would have preferred? Is there anything that you would like done differently next year? If you didn't attend, your input is valued as well! Thanks for a great time! *Tim KF4RTX*

Left: Club members attack the table of goodies. Right: Cyndi KD4ACW and Tim KF4RTX are not carrying Santa's toy sacks!

Charlie W4VFJ installs the RARS Officers for 2000. Looks like another great year